



January 2018



Note from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

2017 was a year of change for the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

In July, the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen transitioned from in-person visits with residents and tenants to assisting residents via telephone, technology and the assistance of volunteer ombudsmen. In August oversight of the Volunteer Ombudsman Program transitioned to the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen. And in October, a new State Long-Term Care Ombudsman was named to the office.

We anticipate a successful 2018 as we continue our service to residents and tenants of long-term care facilities. Although our process for assisting residents and tenants has changed, we remain committed to our charge of advocacy for residents and tenants of long-term care facilities and managed care members.

Residents and tenants of long-term care facilities still have strong advocates in their Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen, who remain ready and able to work to resolve concerns that residents and tenants, or their decision makers, bring to our attention. Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen continue to provide guidance to resident councils and family councils. When long-term care facility staff reach out with questions, Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen continue to direct staff to information sources for answers. Also, please remember that our website has great content for residents, tenants, managed care members and facility staff.

Last week, administrators at facilities in Region 9 should have received a letter, map and poster explaining who the permanent Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman will be for your facility. Effective Jan. 2, there will no longer be

rotating Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman serving your facilities. Instead, a Local Long-term Care Ombudsman has been assigned to each county in the region to serve the needs of long-term care residents and tenants. If you have not received information about who the permanent Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman is for your facility, please call (515) 725-3344.

2018 will be a year of innovation for the State Long-term Care Ombudsman's office. As you know, change is complicated, and it is possible that not every effort we undertake will be a resounding success. But part of growing is trying new ideas and learning how to improve on them, and we are looking forward to approaching things a bit differently with the goal of increasing the quality of service we provide to Iowa's long-term care residents and managed care members.



News & Resources

- Consumer Voice has developed a new resource to summarize the key changes in the revised federal nursing home regulations that went into effect in November as part of Phase 2: <http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/general/summary-of-key-changes-effective-phase-2.pdf>
- Last March, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a memo addressing changes in procedure for the Special Focus Facility (SFF) program for Fiscal Year 2017. The memo focuses on: (1) the number of approved SFF slots and candidates for each state, (2) process of the initial selection notice, (3) requirements for graduating from the SFF program, and (4) authority for termination for SFFs: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Downloads/Survey-and-Cert-Letter-17-20.pdf>
- Newly updated Residents' Rights Fact Sheets are available to download or purchase in sets from the National Consumer Voice website. The sheets are available in English as well as Spanish, French, Chinese and other languages: <http://theconsumervoice.org/issues/recipients/nursing-home-residents/fact-sheets>



Resident/Tenant Rights

- A guest blog on the Justice in Aging website illustrates how the philosophy of Person-Centered Care puts considerable value on an individual's right to make decisions concerning all aspects of his/her life: <http://www.justiceinaging.org/giving-elders-a-voice-in-their-own-care-person-centered-care-and-choice/>



Resident/Tenant Health, Safety & Welfare

- Effective Jan. 1, Region 9 of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman will no longer be served by Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen on a rotating basis. Instead, each county within the region has been reassigned to a Long-Term Care Ombudsman to help ensure consistency and quality of service to long-term care residents and tenants: <https://www.iowaaging.gov/state-long-term-care-ombudsman/find-your-local-long-term-care-ombudsman>



Legislative & Policy Issues

- The 2018 Iowa Legislative Session begins Monday, Jan. 8. The Legislative Services Agency has published a timetable for the 87th General Assembly that includes funnel dates and the 100th Calendar Day of the Session: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/SESTT/861318.pdf>



Managed Care Ombudsman Program

- In response to issues with Medicaid Managed Care in 2017, Disability Rights Iowa is kicking off the #IamMedicaidIowa campaign in 2018. The aim of this campaign is to show the faces of Medicaid, not just the numbers. Everyone with a Medicaid story is encouraged to participate: <http://disabilityrightsiaowa.org/special-announcemen/>
- Please remember that it is best for legal representatives of managed care members to verify with both Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) and the respective MCO that copies of guardianship papers have been received by both entities, as this will support the necessary communication required for the member's care planning. If you have any questions about providing these documents, please contact one of our Managed Care Ombudsmen.



Volunteer Ombudsman Program

- Thanks to all of our Volunteer Ombudsmen for your assistance in 2017. Your generous gifts of time and talent have truly made a difference in the lives of Iowa's long-term care residents and we look forward to continuing to work with you in 2018.



Events & Educational Opportunities

Webinar: "Legal Basics: Elder Financial Exploitation"

Tuesday, Jan. 9 (Noon CT)

[Register](#)

The mission of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare and rights of individuals residing in long-term care by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems and providing advocacy, with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care.